

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of routing an emergency request message from an Internet
2 device to an emergency call answering center comprising the steps of:

3 a) transmitting an IP formatted emergency request message to a
4 network supporting Internet Protocol;

5 b) determining the physical location of the Internet device from the IP
6 address associated with the IP formatted emergency request message;

7 c) converting the IP formatted emergency request message to a
8 format compatible with the emergency call answering center; and

9 d) routing the converted message and the physical location of the
10 Internet device to the emergency-call-answering center.

1 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein step of converting the IP formatted
2 emergency request message involves converting the IP address to a
3 telephone number.

1 3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of routing the converted
2 message includes routing to an emergency response station within the
3 service zone of said Internet device.

1 4. The method of Claim 3 further comprising the step of dispatching
2 emergency personnel to assist a user of said Internet device at said
3 physical location.

1 5. The method of Claim 1 wherein said Internet device is a client terminal
2 in a Local Area Network (LAN).

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the IP address of said client terminal is
2 assigned dynamically when a user of said Internet device attempts to login
3 to said network supporting Internet Protocol.

1 7. The method of Claim 1 wherein further including the step of routing said
2 message to a Public Service Access Point (PSAP) within the service zone
3 of a user of said Internet device.

1 8. The method of Claim 1 wherein said step of determining the physical
2 location of the Internet device is performed by querying a database of
3 Internet user records.

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1 9. Within a network capable of routing Internet Protocol (IP) messages to
2 an emergency call answering center, the network containing at least one
3 database storing a plurality of Internet user records, a method of converting
4 IP formatted emergency request messages to a protocol compatible with
5 the emergency call answering centers comprising the steps of:

6 a) detecting an IP formatted emergency message transmitted by an
7 Internet device;

8 b) using the IP address of the message to query said database;

9 c) returning corresponding physical location associated with the IP
10 address of the message;

11 d) returning the format type associated with said emergency call
12 answering center; and

13 e) using the format type to convert the IP formatted emergency
14 message into a format compatible with said emergency call answering
15 center.

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1 10. A communications system for delivering emergency messages placed
2 through the Internet to a telephonic emergency-call-answering center, said
3 system comprising:

4 a central office;

5 an Internet Protocol (IP) network accessible by Internet users
6 through said central office and containing an entry gateway configured to
7 detect IP formatted messages containing requests for emergency services;
8 and

9 an emergency call handling function linked to said entry gateway and
10 configured to receive said IP formatted messages and deliver them to said
11 telephonic emergency-call-answering center after converting them into a
12 compatible format.

1 11. The communications system of Claim 10 wherein said emergency call
2 handling function includes a database of Internet user translation records.

1 12. The communications system of Claim 11 wherein said translation
2 records include physical location information associated with IP addresses.

1 13. The communications system of Claim 11 wherein said physical
2 location information includes a PSTN telephone number.

1 14. The communications of Claim 10 further comprising an Internet device
2 communicably coupled to said central office and containing the
3 communications facilities for originating an emergency request message in
4 an IP format.

1 15. The communications of Claim 14 wherein said Internet device is a
2 client terminal in a Local Area Network (LAN).

1 16. The system of Claim 10 wherein said entry gateway is an Internet
2 through an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

1 17. The communication system of Claim 10 further comprising an exit
2 gateway providing a routing function between emergency call handling
3 function and the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN).

1 18. The system of Claim 17 wherein said emergency call handling function
2 is configured to access a traditional telephone based emergency call center
3 through said PSTN.

1 19. The system of Claim 17 wherein said emergency call handling function
2 is configured to access a Public Service Access Point through said PSTN
3 when it receives a request for emergency services through said entry
4 gateway.

1 20. The system according to claim 10 wherein said emergency call
2 handling function is a separate element outside the IP network maintained
3 by a third party administrator.